

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A
SUBJECT: EDITORIAL ON DIRECT ELECTIONS TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT.

1. IN AN ANGRY TWO-PART EDITORIAL MAY 4-5 IN AGENCE EUROPE, INFLUENTIAL BRUSSELS DAILY DEVOTED TO EC AFFAIRS, EDITOR EMANUELE GAZZO REPLIED TO MICHEL DEBRE'S RECENT ARTICLE IN LE MONDE TITLED "LA TRICHERIE" ("TRICKERY"), BY ACCUSING DEBRE HIMSELF OF LYING IN HIS ARGUMENTS AGAINST DIRECT ELECTIONS TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. GAZZO, WHO IS PRO-EUROPE AND WARMLY SUPPORTS DIRECT ELECTIONS, ACKNOWLEDGES DEBRE'S RIGHT TO DEFEND HIS STAND AGAINST DIRECT ELECTIONS, BUT CHALLENGES HIS DOING SO WITH WHAT GAZZO DESCRIBES AS "DISTORTIONS OF THE TRUTH AND DOWNRIGHT FALSEHOODS." GAZZO ATTRIBUTES THE FOLLOWING DISTORTIONS TO DEBRE: (1) THE ARGUMENT THAT PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLIES ARE BY THEIR VERY NATURE LIKELY TO EXCEED THEIR MANDATES, AS THE EUROPEAN COAL AND STEEL COMMUNITY ASSEMBLY DID IN THE 1950S, IN ARROGATING TO ITSELF COMPETENCE TO PREPARE A POLITICAL CONSTITUTION FOR EUROPE." GAZZO SAYS THAT IT WAS THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE ECSC WHO DIRECTED THE ASSEMBLY TO PREPARE "A DRAFT TREATY TO SET UP A EUROPEAN POLITICAL COMMUNITY." (2) THE CHARGE THAT FRANCE WILL HAVE ONLY

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81 MPS " OF A TOTAL OF JUST UNDER 500" MPS IN THE DIRECTLY ELECTED PARLIAMENT. GAZZO NOTES THAT THE NEW PARLIAMENT WILL HAVE 410 MEMBERS AND THAT THE FRENCH REPRESENTATION WILL BE THE SAME AS THAT FOR GEMANY, UK AND ITALY.

(3) THE ASSERTION THAT OFFICIAL STATEMENTS FROM THE FRG, ITALY AND THE NETHERLANDS FAVORING DIRECT ELECTIONS HAVE

AFFIRMED THE RIGHT OF AN ELECTED PARLIAMENT TO TAKE UNTO ITSELF ADDITIONAL POWERS. GAZZO AVERS THAT ALL OFFICIAL STATEMENTS TO DATE FROM VARIOUS MEMBER STATE GOVERNMENTS HAVE NOTED THAT THE ELECTED PARLIAMENT WILL HAVE ONLY THOSE POWERS LISTED IN THE EC TREATIES OR ANY ADDITIONAL ONE WHICH MEMBER STATES SPECIFICALLY AGREE TO FIVE IT; (4) THE CHARGE THAT PARLIAMENT AND THE EC COMMISSION WILL COLLUDE TO INTRUDE INTO DIPLOMATIC AND DEFENSE MATTERS NOW OUTSIDE COMMUNITY COMPETENCE. GAZZO'S EDITORIAL SAYS THAT THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT'S PROCEEDINGS TO DATE HAVE INDICATED THAT MP'S ARE WELL AWARE THAT THESE ITEMS FALL OUTSIDE THEIR AND COMMUNITY COMPETENCE AND THAT THERE IS NO WAY FOR PARLIAMENT TO BECOME UNINVOLVED UNLESS MEMBER STATES PERMIT THEM DO DO SO. (5) THE ASSERTION THAT THE PARLIAMENT IS NOT PLAYING ITS PROPER ROLE INSCRUTINY OF COMMUNITY BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES. GAZZO DENIES THIS CHARGE AND NOTES, MOREOVER, THAT THE GAULLISTS IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT WERE AMONG THOSE WHO, IN A RECENT SESSION OF PARLIAMENT, DEMANDED THAT THE COMMUNITY'S REGIONAL FUND BE TRIPLED AFTER A THOROUGH SCRUTINY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS.

2. GAZZO'S EDITORIALS CONCLUDE BY CHARGING THAT DEBRE'S MOTIVE IN FIGHTING DIRECT ELECTIONS IS TO WEAKEN THE COMMUNITY AND BLOCK FURTHER MOVES TOWARD EUROPEAN INTEGRATION BY UNDERMINING THE COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS WHICH HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY IN THIS PROCESS.

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